

Chief, S/OM
25X1A9a

14 October 1955

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Requested Evaluation Answers re [REDACTED] Reports

REFERENCE: Your memorandum of 13 October

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I. Specific Criticisms of [REDACTED] Reports

- a. Are titles sometimes vague or misleading?
Generally no.
- b. Are your requirement and guide control numbers cited when applicable?
Yes, in most cases.
- c. Are source descriptions unsatisfactory or inadequate?
Usually satisfactory, but in some cases too general and uninformative. In such cases, source could probably be protected even with more specific description.
- d. Is material often overclassified?
Yes, especially re use of "US Eyes Only" or "Noform."
- e. Do you understand and make use of the [REDACTED] system of source 25X1A2g and content grading? Is this superfluous?
No, it is not superfluous; yes, we do use it.
- f. Are unrelated subjects combined in the same report?
Yes, but this is not objectionable, since the reason is probably the time factor. We often have an indirect interest in items thrown in with other items of direct concern. A specific index at the beginning of the report, especially when it is long, would be very helpful.
- g. Is the intelligence significance of the data clearly presented?
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Not always. See attached example in the field of civil defense provided by [REDACTED].
- h. Is the information sometimes badly organized?
Yes, but not usually to an objectionable degree. If the organization and presentation were improved and polished, there would probably be a serious delay in transmission.

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1. How useful do you find most "Washington Comments? Are they superfluous?
Should they be organized into the text?
They are quite useful: they often call attention to previous reports which may not have been received: they sometimes give valuable personnel info/commments as to reliability and authenticity sometimes good. Should not be organized into the text.

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II. General Criticisms of [redacted] Reports
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- a. Are [redacted] reports generally too fragmentary?
Not objectionably so. If the field should get only one small but useful item from a source, it should be sent on without delay,
- b. Would you prefer to see more emphasis on analytical reporting?
Interrogators' brief observations are useful, but extensive analysis should be avoided because of the time factor in transmission.
- c. Is the information often too old to be useful?
The information is frequently rather tardy, but it is generally still useful for background and should be sent on even when delayed. Example of tardy reports: info on organizational and policy changes in W. Germany.
- d. Are other collection media capable of providing you, 25X1A2g sufficient time, with the data you usually receive in [redacted] reports?
On some occasions other sources, even [redacted] provide info sooner. However, the [redacted] report in such a case should probably be transmitted since it usually provides some additional info or useful speculation. 25X1A7b
- e. Is the quality uneven?
Inevitably, but not to an objectionable degree.
- f. Does the writing lack clarity? Is it simple?
Statements are sometimes too involved; a simple declaratory style should be used.

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III. Are you prepared on occasion to accept untranslated material?
In which languages?
Yes. In Russian and German, and even in East European Languages.

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IV. In general, how do you feel the quality of [redacted] reporting compares with that of other report series you receive? Favorably.

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V. Beyond the above, how have the methods of [redacted] reporting failed to meet your needs and what suggestions would you have for their improvement?

Field interrogators, who are probably swamped with requirements from many consumers, do not sometimes adequately exploit a source with reference to the specific requirements of a particular consumer. See attached example in the field of civil defense. The exploitation may be not only inadequate but also inaccurate, particularly with reference to the rendering into English of foreign language terms of technical nature. There is no easy solution to such problems. In some cases, if the source is available for some time, it might be preferable for the field station to notify the specially interested consumer rapidly as to the source's background and knowledgeability and invite immediate brief questions. If that is not feasible, there should be a method whereby the consumer could quickly request an ampler and more precise interrogation.

General comment: More specific examples could have been provided in response to the above questions about [redacted] reports if more advance notice had been given. If that had been done, we could have kept these questions in mind while screening [redacted] reports for a specified period of time.

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